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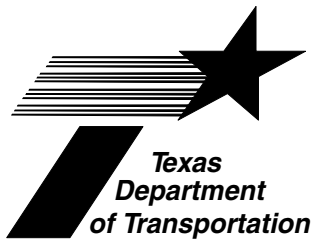
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Learning Information Networking Collaboration



TxDOT – Small Business LINC

WHAT is the LINC program?

The LINC program is a mentor-protege program to prepare small businesses to bid and to perform on Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) contracts as sub-contractors, or prime contractors.

In this program, TxDOT is a mentor to small businesses interested in doing business with TxDOT.

Through a series of meetings, proteges *learn* about TxDOT's business opportunities, and receive *information* to assist them in bidding and performing on TxDOT's contracts.

LINC mentors introduce the proteges to key TxDOT staff and to prime contractors and provide *networking* opportunities with those individuals.

LINC mentors, in *collaboration* with TxDOT district staff, business providers, bonding agents, and trainers, meet with proteges as a group, and individually.

HOW will the LINC program benefit my company?

- ★ You will be assigned a TxDOT mentor to assist you throughout the program.
- ★ You will receive information on how to do business with TxDOT.
- ★ You will receive construction management training.
- ★ You will be given an opportunity to meet and market your firm to key TxDOT personnel and prime contractors.
- ★ You will be included in the LINC bulletin, circulated to prime contractors and TxDOT personnel.
- ★ A marketing presentation and customized portfolio will be developed for your firm.
- ★ You will receive information on:
 - how to pre-qualify as a prime contractor;
 - how to search for contracts on TxDOT's Internet web site;
 - how to find plans on-line.
- ★ You will receive a certificate of completion.

All of this free of charge!

WHO qualifies for the LINC program?

Small businesses that perform a category of work, or supply a type of material included in highway construction and maintenance contracts are eligible.

The firm must be certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Historically Underutilized Business (HUB), or Small Business Enterprise (SBE).

WHERE will the LINC sessions be held?

TxDOT plans to hold sessions throughout the state.

The number of participants at each session will be limited...

...SO DO NOT DELAY IN SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION!!!!



Learning
Information
Networking
Collaboration

TxDOT – Small Business LINC

A Mentor Program for Small Businesses



Texas Department of Transportation

INTRODUCTION

Many Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) and Small Business Enterprises (SBEs) have been successful in acquiring work on TxDOT contracts, yet there are many that have not been successful. Small businesses are critical to economic competitiveness in the Transportation industry; therefore, the Texas Department of Transportation has developed a mentoring program to help alleviate some of the barriers that small construction and maintenance firms face in doing business with the department.

Learning, Information, Networking and Collaboration (**LINC**) is the concept of the new TxDOT-Small Business LINC Program. In this program, TxDOT's Business Opportunity Programs Section (BOP) serves as the LINC Mentor to selected DBE/HUB/SBE firms. The purpose of the program is to prepare the LINC Protégé firms, through Learning, Information, Networking and Collaboration, to bid and perform on TxDOT contracts. Through this program small business LINC Protégés will **learn** about TxDOT's business opportunities and will receive **information** to assist them in bidding and performing on TxDOT's contracts. BOP will introduce the LINC Protégés to key TxDOT staff and to the prime contractors and provide **networking** opportunities with those individuals. LINC Mentors, in **collaboration** with TxDOT district staff, business providers, bonding agents and trainers, will meet with the LINC Protégés in scheduled meetings and will work individually with the LINC Protégés. LINC Bulletins, which will include the firms that participate in the program, their accomplishments and updates on the LINC Program, will be distributed to all prequalified contractors, to the protégés and to District staff throughout the department.

To be eligible for the program a DBE/HUB/SBE must be a firm that performs a category of work or supplies a type of material included in construction and maintenance contracts and has been certified as a DBE, HUB or SBE for at least one year. Firms interested in participating in this program must submit a LINC Protégé application. Twenty LINC Protégés are selected for each session based on the date of receipt of their applications.

Once selected the LINC Protégé must sign a LINC Protégé agreement committing to the time and efforts needed for a successful relationship. The duration of the TxDOT-Small Business LINC is one year. This is a voluntary program and either party may withdraw at any time. Upon completion of the program the LINC Protégé will receive a Certificate of Completion.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) – Any business so certified in accordance with 49 CFR Part 26.

Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) – Any business so certified by the Texas Buildings and Procurement Commission (TB&PC) (formerly the General Services Commission).

Small Business Enterprises (SBEs) – Any business certified as a DBE and/or HUB or otherwise so certified by TxDOT.

Business Opportunity Programs Section (BOP) – A section of the Construction Division of TxDOT that certifies DBEs and SBEs and administers the DBE, HUB and SBE Programs.

LINC Mentor - Employees from BOP.

LINC Protégé - DBEs/HUBs/SBEs that sign an agreement with TxDOT to participate in the TxDOT-Small Business LINC program.

Providers - The company(ies) on contract with BOP to provide marketing and estimating and bidding services to the LINC Protégés.

Trainers – The company(ies) on contract with BOP to provide training to the LINC Protégés.

Session – A series of meetings for the TxDOT-Small Business LINC program in a selected district.

Department – Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

MEETINGS

The TxDOT-Small Business LINC program consists of an introduction meeting and 5 LINC meetings to be held in a specified district. Selection of the district is determined by the number of DBEs, HUBs, SBEs and the number of construction and maintenance contracts available in that district. The DBEs/HUBs/SBEs that have applied, are selected and have signed a LINC Protégé agreement are assigned a LINC Mentor from TxDOT's BOP Section.

INTRODUCTION MEETING

At this meeting the program is explained and each firm is required to sign a Protégé Agreement committing to the time and efforts that will be essential for a successful mentor-protégé relationship.

LINC MEETING 1

The first meeting for the session is a training meeting. A trainer on contract with TxDOT will provide Construction Management training. The topics covered in the training are Bidding and Estimating, Contract Administration, Record Keeping, Construction-related legal issues and Inspections, Labor issues, Equipment usage and Material/Product Testing.

LINC MEETING 2

LINC Protégés work with both a Marketing provider and an Estimating and Bidding provider. The providers begin preparing the LINC Protégés for meeting 3 with the Area Engineers and meeting 4 with the prime contractors.

The Marketing provider presents an example of the presentation and portfolio that will be developed for their firms. The provider then gives the LINC Protégé a list of information needed for the development of a business marketing presentation and a portfolio of the LINC Protégé's company. The provider also establishes deadlines for the LINC Protégé to furnish the necessary information.

The Estimating and Bidding provider reviews TxDOT construction projects with each LINC Protégé and identifies one project for each LINC Protégé to develop a bid. The LINC Protégé shall send the Estimating and Bidding provider a bid for review by the provider prior to meeting 3. The deadline for submitting the bid will be established by the provider.

The BOP Section gives a presentation to the LINC Protégés regarding use of TxDOT's Internet site. Workstations are available for the LINC Protégés to get hands-on Internet experience obtaining project information and copies of plan sheets using Plans On-line.

LINC MEETING 3

Establishing a relationship with the individuals in charge of monitoring and inspecting the work done on the job sites is crucial to becoming a successful contractor. In meeting 3, the LINC Protégés are introduced to individuals from TxDOT's district office and the area engineers' offices.

The Estimating and Bidding provider meets with each LINC Protégé that previously submitted a bid for review. In this meeting the Estimating and Bidding provider gives feedback to the protégé regarding the bid submitted.

LINC MEETING 4

Another crucial relationship that should be developed by the LINC Protégés is with the prime contractors. Rather than sending a quote to a firm, the LINC Protégé can send it to the individual in the firm they have met. The prime will have a face to go with the quote they receive and will already have some key information about the LINC Protégés resources and experience. BOP provides each prime contractor an information packet including the developed business-marketing portfolio of each LINC Protégé. The Marketing provider gives a presentation on each LINC Protégé's company during the meeting. The LINC Protégés are then given an opportunity to meet individually with the representatives of the prime contractor.

LINC MEETING 5

While subcontracting with prime contractors is a good way for small businesses to receive TxDOT contracts, other opportunities are available as a prime contractor on maintenance contracts. BOP conducts a training meeting for LINC Protégés covering the topics relating to Maintenance contracts. The Director of Maintenance from the district is invited to give a presentation of the types of opportunities available in maintenance. Other topics covered during the meeting are prequalification and bidders questionnaire certification, bonding and insurance, and contract requirements (i.e. payroll, specifications, special provisions, inspections, etc.)

RESPONSIBILITIES

LINC Protégé

The LINC Protégé is responsible for complying with the LINC Protégé Agreement as follows:

Attend all meetings scheduled in the applicable district and be present prior to the scheduled start time.

Meet all deadlines for furnishing information and pictures to the marketing provider relating to the presentation and portfolio.

Develop a bid and send the bid to the bidding and estimating provider by the established deadline.

Send to LINC Mentor a copy of all bids submitted for TxDOT contracts.

Contact LINC Mentor when company is awarded a TxDOT contract.

Hold TxDOT, including its employees, or agents harmless from any claim, suit, action, or demand of LINC Protégé or LINC Protégé's creditors, or any other person arising out of this agreement.

LINC Protégé must comply with and accept all clauses and provisions governing the TxDOT-Small Business LINC program; and, must acknowledge that the information provided during the meetings is general and not specific to a particular project.

LINC Mentor

An employee of the BOP Section is assigned to each LINC Protégé. It is the LINC Mentor's responsibility to make sure the LINC Protégé receives and understands all the information presented during the session. The LINC Mentor must have monthly contact with each LINC Protégé to respond to any questions the LINC Protégés may have and to follow up on any bids submitted and contracts awarded. All communications must be documented and filed in LINC Protégés' files. Also, the LINC Mentor must complete a monthly report form for each LINC Protégé and submit the report to the supervisor by the 10th of the following month.

Forms

- Form 2072 TxDOT-Small Business LINC Program, LINC Protégé Application [2072.pdf](#) [2072.exe](#)
- Form 2073 TxDOT-Small Business LINC, LINC Protégé Agreement [2073.pdf](#) [2073.exe](#)
- Form 2074 LINC Mentor Monthly Report [2074.pdf](#) [2074.exe](#)